

Montour School
East side of S. Broadway St.
Montour
Gem County
Idaho

HABS No. ID-37

HABS
ID,
23-MONT,
7-

PHOTOGRAPHS

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS
ID,
23-MONT,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MONTOUR SCHOOL

Location: East side of South Broadway
Montour, Gem County, Idaho
UTM: 11/554050/4862950

Present Owner: United States Department of the Interior

Present Occupant: Unoccupied

Present Use: Unused

Statement of
Significance: This combination grade and high school is
a good example of a small, substantially
built small-town school building.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of erection: 1913

Builder and Architect: Unknown

Historical Narrative:

This school was Montour's second, the first having been located near the York farm on the south edge of the town. The first structure was later moved to the Marsh and Ireton Ranch. The present school building was erected in 1913, and was ready for students in the fall of that year. It was funded with a \$6,700 bond issue. Although the architect is unknown, apparently it was built with some reference to the "arrangement, lighting and other fixtures" of the school in Payette. The first teachers were P.W. Hess, who also served as principal, and Zoe Dunn. It was a combination grade-and high-school, with the older children occupying the second floor. After a gymnasium was built east of the school in 1940 (foundations of which are still visible), the grade school pupils moved there. When first built, the school was under the jurisdiction of School District #14, Boise. It was sold in 1975 to James and Andrea Bean by the Independent School District of Emmettsville, #221.

Note: The northwest corner room on the second floor was originally the science laboratory.

Bibliography:

Emmett Index. 20 March 1913, 1:2; 3 July 1913, 1:6; 13
November 1913, 8:3

Saxton, Cindy. "Montour"., Ms., Parkview Junior High School,
Emmett, Idaho.

Conversations with Alva McConnel, Montour, Idaho, in
March 1979.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

General Statement

1. Architectural merit and interest: The school building is a good example of a small, substantially built small-town school building. The design and construction are good.
2. Condition of the fabric: Good.
3. Summary description: Two stories, approximately 44'-6" by 54'-8", roughly rectangular in plan.

Detailed description of exterior

1. Foundations: The foundations are concrete varying in heights from 21 to 36 inches and projecting $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches beyond the face of the wall above. The overall thickness measured at the south window of the cellar is 18 inches. At the northwest corner the lower bricks of the wall have been removed, and one may see that the foundation is concrete and is not a cement surface over brickwork, as is the construction of sills and arches at door and window openings. The top of the foundation slopes down about 30 degrees to the horizontal where it projects and vertical corners have 45 degree chamfers with $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch faces. The surface of the concrete is a natural dark grey color and has a smooth finish as from a thin coating of cement plaster. The aggregate exposed at the south cellar window is river gravel. At the southwest corner there is a vertical crack in the foundation and some spalling of the surface. In general, however, the foundation is in very good condition.
2. Wall construction: The walls are constructed of red common brick, averaging $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{1}{2}$ by 4 inches, laid in common bond with headers separated by six (and occasionally by

seven) courses of stretchers. At the northwest corner, where the lower few bricks are broken away and the lower three wythes visible, it appears that the wall is not cavity wall construction. The joints average in thickness from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch. The vertical joints are cut flush and the horizontal joints are struck with the surface of the joint sloping inward. The mortar is almost white and is quite sound. The joint work looks a little sloppy because the edges of the bricks are not regular.

There is mica in the soil in this region, and in the bright sunlight the brick sparkles with small gold-colored flecks the size of very fine sand.

At northwest corner of the building, resting on the foundation is a concrete cornerstone three courses high and one-and-a-half courses wide. The numbers 1913 are incised in it: 19 on the east face and 13 on the north.

3. Structural system: The outer walls of the building are bearing walls with wooden joist floor, ceiling, and roof construction. The brick outer walls are 13 inches thick at both first and second stories.
4. Porches, stoops: There is a concrete stoop at the north entrance and a flight of seven concrete steps and a landing at the south entrance, which appear to be an addition because the color of the concrete does not match that at the door sill. Metal pipe columns support a wooden framework above the steps, roofed with corrugated fiberglass. The north stoop appears to be original; its surface is badly cracked.
5. Chimneys: There are two brick chimneys built into the east wall, flush at the exterior surface of the wall, projecting into the rooms, and rising about nine feet above the roof. Some mortar is missing from the top 4 or five courses; and some bricks as well. There is a small, very low, brick chimney near the west wall at the north end.
6. Openings, doorways and doors: The two doorways are arched and spanned by a semicircular ring with a smooth, gray cement finish and scored radially to simulate voussoirs. The keystone form of both doorways is set forward and that of the front door rises slightly above the other voussoirs, which project forward of the face of the brickwork one inch. Visual inspection indicates that these decorative arches are built in the same way window sills are. (See description below.)

The frame of the front (north) door is of wood. There is a semicircular transom, glazed. On both sides of the door

there are what appear to have been sidelights, but they are now boarded over with tongue-and-groove wood. The door is a flush door with a small window. A metal edging covering the top edge and the swinging vertical edge is screwed to the door, along with a high metal kick plate inside and outside.

The rear(south) door has a similar frame and transom, and has a similarly boarded up panel at one side of the door, which may have been a sidelight. The door is a five-panel wooden door, glazed at the upper two panels.

Both doors and related woodwork are painted white.

7. Openings, windows: The second-story windows have semi-circular arched openings and the first floor and cellar windows have horizontal heads. At the second-story windows have projecting rings with a smooth grey cement finish scored to resemble voussoirs. At the first-story windows there is a similar treatment in the form of a flat arch. All windows have projecting cement-surfaced sills.

From inspection of two damaged window sills on the east wall it was found that the sills were cast in place, possibly using a form of some sort, although the bricks at the sills projected outward as well. The sills projected outward one inch from the face of the wall. The cement is about 5/8 inch average thickness at the vertical face of the sills, but about 1/4 inch at the sloping upper surface. It would appear that the decorative treatment at window and door heads was made in the same fashion. Since this cement finish carries through on the soffits of all openings, the manner of spanning them cannot be determined. However, at the interior of the second-story rooms, the windows have horizontal heads, even though they are arched on the exterior.

All windows are 1/1 sash and have wooden frames and sash. Second-story sash are rectangular, with wooden spandrels adapting them to the arched exterior shape. All glass is clear, except that the first-story window by the fire escape has obscure wire glass.

Cellar windows were boarded up and access was not possible to the cellar. Only the wooden frames of these windows was visible.

First- and second-story windows are painted a medium grey, much weathered. Cellar windows are painted white.

8. Roof, shape, covering: The roof is hipped and covered

with wood shingles. A metal covering shaped to resemble a line of lapping shingles is placed at ridges and hips. All are very dark grey. The belfry roof is also hipped and covered with wood shingles, but the metal pieces covering the hips are not shaped, but flat. The roofing is in fair condition.

9. Roof, eaves: The rafters project to form the eaves, and the soffit is of vee-jointed match boards. Rafters and soffit are a medium gray in color. There is a surface-mounted metal angle near the edge of the roof above the north entrance and serving as a gutter. There are no other gutters.
10. Roof, tower: At the north side of the roof, roughly above the entrance door, there is a belfry with wood-shingled lower walls, vee-jointed matchboard ceiling, and wood-louvered upper walls. (the louvers on the north side have fallen in.) At the point of its hip roof a tapered pole rises some 8 to 10 feet. A trapdoor in the ceiling of the second-story room below provides access to the tower.

Detailed description of the interior

1. Floor plan: At the first story the eastern portion contains two classrooms; and the western, the hallway, stairway, toilets, and a closet. At the second story the eastern portion contains an auditorium with a stage at its south end. The western portion contains a small room at the north, the hall and the stairway.
2. Stairways: One enters the building on the north side at ground level and ascends six steps to reach the first story. The main stairway is of wood and ascends along the west wall of the building in two straight flights with a landing at mid height. The balustrade is of wood with simple balusters of square cross section and a newell also of square cross section. Hardboard has been installed to cover the balusters. At the east wall of the building, leading from the auditorium, an exterior fire escape provides access to the ground outside.
3. Flooring: The floor at the ground-level north entrance is of concrete, considerably cracked. Toilet room floors are linoleum. The flooring elsewhere is fir matchboards of 3¼ inch exposure with a clear finish. The stairways and landing and adjacent portions of the first and second story floors have been covered with what appears to be heavy asphalt-saturated roofing paper held in place with roofing nails.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are of plaster with a lightly textured sand finish. At exterior walls, the plaster is applied directly to the inner surface of the brickwork. Shadows of the wood lath are discernible at second-story ceilings. A light green enamel dado 4'-3" high is used throughout. Walls above are painted lighter green or light yellowish cream.
5. Doorways and doors: Door trim is wood and flat, 4½ inches wide at jambs and 7 1/8 inches high at heads, with a projecting ½ inch bead at the lower edge of the head trim. Window trim is the same, including trim at the second-story windows, which are arched only at the exterior.

Doors are of the conventional five-panel type and usually have transoms above them.

6. Interior trim: There is a small amount of cabinet-work of conventional design and shelving which appears to be improvised. There are wide glazed openings between the auditorium and the adjoining smaller rooms at the north, along with a connecting door.
7. Hardware: This is of the usual economical design of the time.
8. Mechanical and electrical equipment: Incandescent diffuser globe fixtures are suspended at the second story and parallel rows of fluorescent tubes are fastened to first-story ceilings. Presently circulating warm air heating is used, with supply and return registers in partitions and floors. Stovepipe thimbles at chimneys in classrooms, auditorium, and second-story smaller rooms indicate that stoves were the original method of heating. There are drinking fountains in the hallway of both stories, toilets at the first floor, and a sump pump in the basement.

Site and surroundings

1. Orientation and general setting: The front of the school faces north and looks toward the rest of the town. A gravel driveway from South Broadway comes generally eastward to a turn around in front of the school. A line of large maple trees runs west to east paralleling the north boundary of the site, and stumps of several other trees of similar girth indicate that the line once continued some distance farther east beyond the school. The ground slopes very slightly down from south to north.
2. Historic landscape design: Only the line of trees; see above.

3. Outbuildings: None

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by Dennett, Muessig & Associates, Iowa City, Iowa, in cooperation with the Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific Northwest Region. It fulfills the Bureau of Reclamation's obligations under a memorandum of agreement between the Bureau, the State of Idaho, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, pursuant to 36 CFR 800. The structure was photographed, measured, and drawn March - September, 1979, by Sarah J. Dennett and Hans Muessig, Project Supervisors; Wesley I. Shank, Project Architectural Historian/Historical Architect, (Iowa State University); Martha H. Bowers, Project Historian; Robert A. Ryan, Project Photographer; and Philipp Muessig, Project Assistant.

APPENDIX

CHAIN OF TITLE: MONTOUR SCHOOL

Description: Lot 49, Dewey lots, T7N R1E, Boise Meridian

Reference: Recorder's Office, Gem County Courthouse, Emmett, Idaho

1913 Deed 7 May 1913
Recorded 21 May 1913
Book A Deeds. p. 217
E. H. Dewey, Trustee, E. H. Dewey & S. N. Dewey
to
Trustees of School District #14, Boise

1975 Deed 10 July 1975
Recorded 12 August 1975
Deed Instrument # 114275
Independent School District of Emmettville #221
to
James N. Bean & Andrea Bean

1976 Deed 30 August 1976
Recorded 17 January 1977
Deed Instrument # 118812
James N. Bean & Andrea Bean
to
J. N. Bean & Andrea Bean, Trustees

1977 Deed 13 June 1977
Recorded 22 June 1977
Deed Instrument # 120483
James N. Bean & Andrea Bean, & James N. Bean &
Andrea Bean as Trustees of James N. Bean
Family Trust
to
U. S. A.